

Message Text

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PAGE 01 JAKART 04724 140448Z
ACTION H-03

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INFO AMCONSUL MEDAN
AMCONSUL SURABAYA
AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

C O N F I D E N T I A L JAKARTA 4724

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OREP (WOLFF, LESTER)
SUBJECT: VISIT OF CONGRESSMAN GOODLING TO EAST TIMOR

1. CONGRESSMAN WILLIAM GOODLING BECAME THE FIRST AMERICAN
CONGRESSMAN TO VISIT EAST TIMOR SINCE ITS INTEBRATION
WITH INDONESIA WHEN HE LANDED AT DILI ON THE AFTERNOON
OF APRIL 10.

2. DURING HIS TWO-DAY STAY IN EAST TIMOR, THE CONGRESSMAN
VISITED THREE REGENCIES, IN ADDITION TO DILI; MET
BRIEFLY WITH THE INDONESIA MILITARY COMMANDER OF EAST
TIMOR, BRIG. GEN. DADING; HAD EXTENSIVE CONVERSATIONS
WITH THE VICE-GOVERNOR (AND ACTING GOVERNOR) OF EAST
TIMOR, FRANCISCO XAVIER LOPEZ DA CRUZ, AND CALLED ON
THE BISHOP OF DILI, BISHOP REBIERO. HE ALSO HAD THE
OPPORTUNITY FOR INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS WITH LOCAL GOVERN-
MENT (ALL TIMORESE) AND MILITARY OFFICIALS AND HELD
PUBLIC QUESTION-AND-ANSWER SESSIONS AT ALL STOPS WITH
COMMUNITY LEADERS, PROMINENTLY INCLUDING FOREIGN CATHOLIC
MISSIONARIES IN BAUCAU AND BOBONARO. CONGRESSMAN
GOODLING WAS GREETED BY LARGE CROWDS WHEREVER HE WENT.

3. IN HIS PUBLIC AND PRIVATE COMMENTS, CONGRESSMAN
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PAGE 02 JAKART 04724 140448Z

GOODLING EXPLAINED THAT THE PURPOSE OF HIS VISIT WAS TO
GATHER INFORMATION, FIRST-HAND, ON THE CURRENT
SITUATION IN TIMOR, AND TO GET A BALANCED ACCOUNT OF
EVENTS SURROUNDING THE TIMORESE CIVIL WAR AND INDONESIA'S
INVOLVEMENT IN TIMOR, EXPECIALLY ON THE MATTER OF
"ATROCITIES." HE FURTHER EXPLAINED, WHERE THE POLITICAL
SOPHISTICATION OF HIS AUDIENCE PERMITTED, CONGRESSIONAL

INTEREST IN THE USE OF U.S. MILITARY EQUIPMENT IN TIMOR
AND DISCUSSED THE ACTIVITIES AND CONGRESSIONAL TESTIMONY
OF JAMES DUNN.

4. INDONESIAN OFFICIALS NOTABLY THE VICE-GOVERNOR,
STRESSED THAT THE SECURITY SITUATION IN EAST TIMOR WAS
GOOD, WITH ONLY SCATTERED REMNANTS OF FRETILIN
OPERATING IN SEVERAL MOUNTAINOUS REGIONS IN THE CENTER
OF THE PROVINCE. THEY CAUTIOUSLY ADMITTED THAT
INDONESIAN "EXCESSES" AND "ERRORS" HAD OCCURRED,
BUT CONSISTENTLY STRESSED THAT FRETILIN TERROR HAD BEEN
MUCH MORE EXTENSIVE AND, MOREOVER, HAD THE SANCTION OF THE
FRETILIN LEADERSHIP AS AN INTEGRAL ELEMENT OF FRETILIN
POLICY (A POINT CONFIRMED BY BISHOP REBIERO).

5. COMMUNITY LEADERS, NOTABLY THE CATHOLIC MISSIONARIES,
WERE LESS SANGUINE ABOUT THE SECURITY SITUATION,
ESPECIALLY IN THE INTERIOR, AND SPOKE OF MORE FRETILIN
ACTIVITY. THEY CONCURRED, HOWEVER, THAT GOVERNMENT
SECURITY IN THE POPULATED AREAS WAS EFFECTIVE.

6. THE MISSIONARIES DESCRIBED THE ATROCITIES AS THE
INEVITABLE RESULT OF CIVIL WAR AND NOTED THAT BOTH
SIDES SHARED THE BLAME. THOUGH THEY GENERALLY
ATTRIBUTED THE WORST EXCESSES TO THE FRETILIN, THEY
WERE LESS CATEGORICAL ON THIS QUESTION THAN THE GOVERN-
MENT OFFICIALS. BISHOP REBIERO AND A YOUNG ITALIAN
PRIEST IN BAUCAU SPOKE WITH PARTICULAR EFFECT OF THE
NEED TO LEAVE BEHIND THE TRAGEDY OF THE PAST AND DO
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PAGE 03 JAKART 04724 140448Z

WHAT PRACTICALLY COULD BE DONE TO HELP THE PEOPLE OF
TIMOR.

7. THE CONGRESSMAN WAS ACCOMPANIED THROUGHOUT HIS TRIP
BY INDONESIAN OFFICIALS. HIS SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSIONS
WERE CONDUCTED IN ENGLISH, INDONESIAN (THROUGH AN
EMBASSY ESCORT OFFICER) AND, MOSTLY, IN PORTUGUESE
(THROUGH AN INDONESIAN INTERPRETER, WITH AN EMBASSY
OFFICER KNOWLEDGABLE IN PORTUGUESE MONITORING THE
DISCUSSIONS).

8. CONGRESSMAN GOODLING HAS READ AND APPROVED THIS
TELEGRAM.
NEWSOM

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